



**COUNCIL OF  
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



Brussels, 21 March 2010  
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**Declaration by the High Representative, Catherine Ashton, on  
behalf of the EU on the occasion of the International Day for  
the Elimination of Racial Discrimination on 21 March 2010**

The European Union strongly condemns all forms of intolerance, racism, racial and other types of discrimination. Based on the principles that all humans are born equal in dignity and rights, the European Union's Charter of Fundamental Rights explicitly prohibits discrimination based on any grounds, whether they be race or colour, sex, origin, religion or belief, or on the grounds of a person's opinion or sexual orientation.

The European Union continues to demonstrate its unwavering commitment to the international human rights standards underpinning the fight against racism and once again calls on all states that have not yet signed, ratified or implemented the International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination to do so.

The European Union continues its cooperation with all relevant international actors and in international fora worldwide, and considers that in particular the work of the United Nations, the Council of Europe and the OSCE is as significant as ever. The EU is also a close partner of relevant civil society organisations in the fight against racism.

The European Union is mainstreaming the fight against discrimination in its cooperation strategies. And, through its European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights, the EU supports a wide range of civil society organisations in their work against racism, xenophobia and non-discrimination.

The European Union remains firmly committed to implementing the goals and objectives of the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance in Durban/South Africa in 2001.

**P R E S S**

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The EU emphasises that the follow-up process to Durban must be pursued as a consensual joint effort by the international community, maintaining the prohibition against all forms of discrimination, yet without prejudice to other fundamental freedoms.

The Candidate Countries Turkey, Croatia\* and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia\*, the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia, and the EFTA countries Iceland, members of the European Economic Area, as well as Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia align themselves with this declaration.

\* Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

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